

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 484

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 6515

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TAGS: BDIS, ELAB

SUBJ: STRIKE AT CONTINENTAL AIR SERVICES

1. CONTINENTAL AIR SERVICES, INC. GROUND MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL, LED BY THE RECENTLY CREATED LAO LABOR UNION, WENT ON STRIKE THE MORNING OF MONDAY 19 AUGUST 1974.

2. ALL CONTINENTAL AIR OPERATIONS, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITIES AT WATTAY AIRPORT WERE REQUIRED TO SHUT DOWN DUE TO PICKETING BY THE STRIKERS.

3. THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH CAUSED THE STRIKE FELL INTO THREE MAIN CATEGORIES: (A) BASIC WAGES, (B) FRINGE BENEFITS, AND (C) MANAGEMENT/EMPLOYEE RELATIONS. NEGOTIATIONS TO RESOLVE THE ABOVE COMMENCED THE SAME MORNING. PARTICIPANTS INCLUDED REPRESENTATIVES FROM: (A) THE NEW LAO LABOR UNION, (B) CONTINENTAL MANAGEMENT, AND (C) CONTINENTAL WORKERS. MEMBERS OF THE MIXED AIRPORT POLICE CONTINGENT SAT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AS OBSERVERS.

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4. DURING THE TWO DAYS OF NEGOTIATIONS THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE AND ALL STRIKERS LEFT THE AIRPORT AREAS BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT ON MONDAY NIGHT, RETURNING AT NINE A.M. TUESDAY MORNING.

5. NEGOTIATIONS REACHED AGREEMENT ON TUESDAY AFTERNOON AND FULL OPERATIONS RESUMED ON WEDNESDAY, 21 AUGUST 1974.

6. FINAL AGREEMENTS ON THE THREE GENERAL AREAS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

SALARY - 25 PERCENT INCREASE.

FRINGE BENEFITS

A. WELFARE BENEFITS INCLUDING MEDICAL, TERMINATIONS, VACATIONS WILL FOLLOW LAO LABOR LAWS.

B. LOCAL HOLIDAYS IN ACCORDANCE WITH LAO ORDINANCES AND DECREES.

C. INITIAL UNIFORMS AT EMPLOYERS EXPENSE.

LABOR MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

A. NO REPRISAL ACTION AGAINST STRIKERS.

B. LABOR/MANAGEMENT GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE FORMED

C. MR. KLAUSE (SWISS CITIZEN), SUPERVISOR OF GROUND SERVICES, DISMISSED AT REQUEST OF LAO EMPLOYEES.

D. MR. SANGA (THAI CITIZEN), GROUND SERVICES DEPARTMENT. DISMISSED AT REQUEST OF LAO EMPLOYEES.

7. NEGOTIATIONS WERE CARRIED OUT IN COOPERATIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE ATMOSPHERE BY ALL PARTIES. PICKET LINES WERE ORDERLY AND CONTROLLED. OF INTEREST WAS THE PRESENCE OF THE TWO AIRPORT JOINT SECURITY COMMANDERS, COL. NGEUN SAMRITH D. SASORITH VIENTIANE SIDE AND COL KHAMMOUAN SAVAYVANH/PATHET LAO, WHO ACTED AS OBSERVERS DURING THE ENTIRE NEGOTIATIONS. CONTINENTAL AIR SERVICES CONTINGENT AT THE NEGOTIATIONS EXPRESSED THE FEELING THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE TWO COMMANDERS HAD A TEMPERING INFLUENCE.

8. THERE HAVE BEEN SINCE AUGUST 16 SIMILAR STRIKES BY THE WORKERS OF VIENTIANE MUNICIPALITY GOVERNMENT, THE VIENTIANE ABBATOIR AND LAO WOOD INDUSTRIES. STRIKES AT THE VIENTIANE MUNICIPALITY AND THE ABBATOIR HAVE BEEN TERMINATED AND THE LAO WOOD INDUSTRIES STRIKE SHOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BE FINISHED BY NLT THE END OF THIS WEEK.

9. A MORE DETAILED REPORT AND ANALYSIS ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF THE STRIKES AND THE NEW LABOR ORGANIZATION INVOLVED FOLLOW BY SEPTTEL.
WHITEHOUSE

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